

**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**  
**Report for January 1948**

**EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES** Excluding the number of persons coming to the office specifically for help concerning Unemployment Compensation problems, for the usual union or employer difficulties, and for general employment information, there was a total of one hundred twenty-four persons who received help from this office in their search for jobs. Of that total, seventy-eight were males and forty-six were females. This is 227% of the total number helped in December 1945, and 775% of those helped similarly in December 1944. And, those figures also exclude all household worker employment activity. There were thirty-two Household worker referrals during January.

Our services to Veterans represented help to thirty-five, or 46% of the male registrants. Thirteen of these thirty-five Veterans specifically requested counselling service, and most of the others received some such service during their referral interviews, which lengthened the average time consumed by each interview. Just those thirteen Veterans, required twenty seven interviews.

This increase in the total number of persons seeking help from the League, is partly because of strikes, and partly because of resumption of peace-time production. The strike situation is temporary, and we need not be alarmed at labor turnover on this score alone. However, we should give grave concern to efforts to cause peace-time production to be done by no smaller percentages of Negroes than of whites. Of concern, also, is the fact that available jobs have definitely decreased in number, and in pay-rates. This is reflected dramatically in the fact that only seventy-three referrals were made from among eighty-nine persons specifically asking for work. If more jobs were available, more than half the thirty-five persons counselled would have accepted jobs also.

It should also be noted that the rate of rejections of applicants referred from this office, is increasing. Up to now only about 5% of our referrals have not become placements. Now the percentage is nearer 10%. With more job hunters available, employers have become extremely "choosy"; and the absence of any but a few openings in most firms, enables them to secure a good number of white and Negro applicants from among whom too often a few - or even less - white persons are hired. Only the continuation of our field relationships with innumerable companies, will effect placements for job-seekers who come to us, and who need jobs so badly. Despite stories of huge individual personal savings accounts, our clients are often penniless, and in extraordinarily emergent circumstances.

**DISCRIMINATION** Our efforts in the field are tied in with such problems arising from office interviews where cases of discrimination are reported. Of several cases during January three were clear-cut, and followed up as specific cases, with charges. One case was referred to us by the State Division Against Discrimination because it involved a federal government office and was outside the Division Against Discrimination's jurisdiction. The Industrial Relations Secretary effected satisfactory adjustment with the reinstatement of a CAF-2 clerical worker who had been discharged because of "inefficiency". The rating was found to have been based on racial discrimination and it was removed from the clerk's permanent Civil Service record.

Another case, referred from this office to the DAD, resulted in satisfactory hiring of a man previously refused employment when sent on a legitimate referral from the Newark USES office. The Newark USES office did not report this case to the DAD, as it should have done in accordance with the directives sent from the State USES Director's office. This particular directive, incidentally, was the result of the

efforts of your Industrial Relations Secretary to have pressure brought on the State Director's office to effect a working arrangement with the LAD. The groundwork was laid when your Secretary assembled the Executive Secretaries of Urban Leagues and similar agencies in New Jersey, for a conference with the state USES Director in Trenton. The final touch constituted open letters from your Secretary to the DAD Commissioner and from the CIO to the State USES Director. Both recipients were informed before-hand of intentions, and a conference between the DAD and the USES offices was immediately scheduled.

Your Secretary's work is not concluded, however. As the case above shows, we must stimulate the will to follow the spirit of the objective and its actual provisions.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION** Among the Veterans who were counselled were six who want apprenticeship training in four aspects of the construction field. In your Secretary's concern about the building trades unions' undemocratic membership representation - with the exception of the Brickmasons and the Plumbers unions - your Secretary is using these six Veterans' cases as the spearhead of his drive for inclusion of Negroes in as many building trades unions as possible, and to find apprenticeship training of all sorts for those Negroes wanting it and able to profit most by it. The Industrial Relations Secretary conferred with the President of the Building Trades Council and secured the promise of his cooperation with your Secretary. The chairman of each Apprenticeship Committee of the sixteen individual locals are being seen to get their approval of Negro youth referred by the Urban Leagues. We cannot expect an easy time. So far, quite the contrary appears to be true. It is too early, yet, to single out instances; their full meaning will be seen in the actual acceptance of persons referred.

No actual committee organization seemed advisable for this program. However, if present personal efforts do not show enough results, community help must be stimulated. Your Secretary has from the Mayor the arrangement whereby any actual discrimination in hiring, on account of race, for any project involving funds of the city of Newark, may be adjusted. Apprenticeship training, for Negroes, is not so clear-cut.

Through the Industrialist's Program your Secretary effected the placement of a Negro Veteran as a Lineman at the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company. It appears that he is the first Negro ever employed by that company in any such capacity.

With the President of Thomas A. Edison Co., your Secretary is urging a demonstration of integration of Negro and white workers at top levels as well as on the production floor. The recent strike at Edison, and now the general strike situation, have impeded progress of plans. During January, your Secretary secured commitment to the plan, from a second top official of the company.

In line with your Secretary's work with the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company, a study was made of actual progress toward integration of Negro and white employees of the company. Your Secretary found conditions good, actually saw thirteen Negro girls working as operators, and several as Clerical workers. The company is now on the right road, but we are not ready to reduce our efforts yet.

The Executive Board of the IWCA has approved that agency's co-sponsorship with the Urban League of the Household Employment Conference.

With a student from the New York School of Social Work assigned to the New Jersey Urban League for his field work, there was a question of what area of our work the student would devote his study to. His selection was the industrial relations work. This means adequate time for supervision must be found by the Industrial Relations Secretary. This problem was eased by the fact that the student has had some experience that can be utilized and built upon. He is now assigned to the details of our Vocational Opportunity Campaign. The National Urban League VOC is scheduled for

march 10-16. Our efforts will coincide with those of all locals observing the VOC this year during March 10-16.

At the personal invitation of Senator Alexander Smith, your Secretary attended a Hearing on the Minimum Wage Bill, in Trenton. A transcribed copy of your Secretary's statement for passage of the Bill, has been sent to us, with the Senators decision to vote for passage.

Your Secretary wrote a strong (not to be published) letter to Senator Hawkes, anent the Senator's stand against the FEPC Bill. The Senator's reply seemed to convey a chance that a change in his position could be effected. Your Secretary spoke of this possibility to the New Jersey Council for a Permanent FEPC meeting in Orange. Your Secretary had to refuse an office with this group because of the pressure of closer League work, and, instead, plans to help those actually carrying the responsibility. Discussions were to arrange committees to talk with Senator Hawkes, and other political leaders. The Executive Secretary of the Bloomfield Council on Race Relations is chairman of a committee to gain support for the Mass Meeting in Madison Square Garden (NYC) already announced, and has already conferred with your Secretary on what should be done in New Jersey.

Another meeting was held, in Elizabeth, of the Employment Workers group (Urban Leagues and similar agencies in New Jersey) of which your Secretary is chairman. Beyond other pertinent business before the group, your Secretary presented the plans for the Household Employment Conference scheduled for Newark in March. The representatives of the other areas requested inclusion in the conference. It appears that the conference may get excellent support from practically all of the northern part of the state.